

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02

SS-15 ICA-20 EB-08 TRSE-00 OMB-01 DLOS-09 OES-07

/128 W

-----116138 130614Z /11

P R 130400Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY SUVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7251

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

USMISSION GENEVA

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS SUVA 0583

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLOS, FJ

SUOJECT: FIJI CLAIMS ARCHIPELAGO STATUS

REF: SUVA 0566

1. AS EXPECTED IN REFTTEL, PRIME MINISTER, RATU SIR KAMISESE MARA SIGNED A DECLARATION ON APRIL 12 THAT WILL MAKE FIJI AN ARCHIPELAGC REGIME AS OF APRIL 21. THE SIGNED DOCUMENT LINKS BY SEA FIJI'S APPROXIMATELY 400 ISLANDS EXCEPT FOR TWO REMOTE UNCLASSIFIED

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AREAS, THE ROTUMAN GROUP TO THE NORTH AND SMALL CEVA-I-RA ISLAND TO THE SOUTH OF KADAVU. ARCHIPELAGO STATUS FOR FIJI IS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT TS A 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT THE GOVER MENT DID INTEND TO DECLARE THE 200-MILE ZONE ASAS IT COULD NEGOTIATE A SOLUTION TO THE OVERLAPPING PROBLEM WITH NEIGHBORING ISLAND COUNTRIES.

2. THE IMMEDIATE RESULT OF THIS DECLARATION WILL BE TO EXPAND FIJI'S FULL SOVEREIGNTY FROM 7,000 SQUARE MILES OF LAND AREA TO OVER 50,000 SQUARE MILES OF SEA. IT GIVES EXPRESSION TO FIJI CLAIM TO EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO EXPLOIT THE RESOURCES IN THIS AREA.

3. THE PRESS RELEASE ISSUED IN THIS CONNECTION RECOGNIZES FIJI'S OBLIGATION TO ALLOW FREE PASSAGE THROUGH THE ARCHIPELAGO TO FOREIGN SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT BUT IN THE FUTURE FIJI MAY RESTRICT THEM TO SPECIFIED SEA LANES OR AIR CORRIDORS. THIS OF COURSE RAISES THE MAJOR PROBLEM OF FIJI OF POLICING SUCH A VAST AREA AND FINDING THE APPROPRIATE KINDS OF AIR AND SEA SURVEILLANCE CRAFT.

4. THE LOCAL POPULATION WELCOMES THIS NEWS. THE MORNING NEWS-PEPER BORROWED FOR THE TITLE THE WORDS OF THE PM AND CALLED THIS "A WATERSHED FOR FIJI.". THEY OBSERVED THAT THE EXTENDED BOUNDARIES COULD BRING THE NATION GREAT PROSPERITY. IN DISCUSSING THE BACKGROUND OF THE DECLARATION, THE PM CALLED A HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND STATED THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ARCHIPELAGIC REGIME RESULTED FROM FIJI MOVES AT THE UNITED NATIONS LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE. THERE FIJI ARGUED THAT THE SEA LINKING AN ISLAND GROUP WAS WHAT GAVE IT GEOGRAPHIC UNITY. OTHER NATIONS ACCEPTED THIS PRINCIPLE NOW BEING APPLIED IN THIS DECLARATION.

5. FUTURE ACTION WILL BE AN AMENDMENT CREATING A SIMILAR ARCHIPELAGIC REGIME FOR THE ROTUMAN ISLANDS GROUP; NEGOTIATING UNCLASSIFIED

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WITH ISLAND NEIGHBORS TO ESTABLISH THE 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONES AND THE DRAWING UP OF LAWS COVERING MANAGEMENT OF THE FISHERY RESOURCES AND THE GRANTING OF LICENSES TO FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS TO OPERATE IN THE AREA.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TERRITORIAL WATERS, TREATY ENTRY INTO FORCE, TWO HUNDRED MILE LIMIT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SUVA00583
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D780158-0728
Format: TEL
From: SUVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780460/aaaabyui.tel
Line Count: 99
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a1e339b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 SUVA 566
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2978974
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CHANGED> VJT 20040916
Subject: FIJI CLAIMS ARCHIPELAGO STATUS
TAGS: PLOS, FJ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a1e339b1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014